

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 16-18 are pending. Independent claims 1 and 13 have been amended to restate the silver concentration in the wound dressing and not in the oxidized regenerated cellulose-silver complex as previously presented. It is thought that claiming the invention in terms of weight % silver in the wound dressing would simplify comparison to the cited art. Support for the amendment may be found in the Specification, for example, on page 2, lines 4-6 and page 4, lines 23-28.

By way of review, the present invention is directed to the use of a specified low concentration range of silver from 0.1 wt.% to 0.3 wt.% in order to achieve both an antimicrobial effect and a surprising proliferative effect on wound healing cells. The range of 0.1 wt.% to 0.3wt.% silver is substantially lower than the conventional range for antimicrobial silver-containing wound dressings. However, the present inventors have found that such a low silver concentration range is needed in order to achieve the proliferative effect on wound healing cells. At higher silver contents, e.g. 0.5 wt%, the silver has an antiproliferative effect on wound healing cells.

Support for the technical effect underlying the present invention, the Applicants refer to the examples of the present application. The inventors have indicated that the actual silver content in of the materials studied in the examples was as follows:

Reference example 2	11.25 wt.% Ag
Reference example 3	5 wt.% Ag
Reference example 4	2.5 wt.% Ag
Reference example 5	0.5 wt.% Ag
Example 6	0.25 wt.% Ag
Reference example 7	0.05 wt.% Ag

The data presented in the present application show that the antimicrobial effect of the silver is lost at the low silver concentration of reference example 7, and that the proliferative effect of the silver is lost at the relatively higher silver concentrations of reference examples 2-5 (i.e., at 0.5 wt.% Ag and higher).

The proliferative effect of silver at the low concentration range from 0.1 to 0.3 weight % is a completely new discovery, supported by the above cited data. Furthermore, it has also been discovered that the same low concentrations of silver has anti-inflammatory potential.

The Examiner rejects claims 1,5,6,10,13, and 16-18 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over GB 2,314,842 (Watt) in view of US 6,409,881 (Jaschinski). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Examiner cites Watt for disclosing oxidized regenerated cellulose and collagen complexes and notes the lack of disclosure in Watt for silver containing compositions and then cites Jaschinski for disclosing treatment of “oxidized cellulose with a silver based antibacterial agent in an amount of 0.1 wt% to 25 wt. % (particularly 0.1 wt% to 0.5 wt%) (col. 24, lines 37-51) in order to confer antibacterial properties to medical products for the inherent purpose of preventing bacterial growth”. The Examiner then concludes that claimed ranges that “overlap or lie inside ranges disclosed by the prior art” is prima facie obvious. The foregoing rejection is respectfully traversed.

Firstly, Applicants submit that the Examiner has failed to provide a prima facie obviousness rejection as there is no suggestion nor disclosure that a complex of silver with oxidized regenerated cellulose be formed as part of a wound dressing. Instead the Examiner’s combination of references is best directed toward treating complexes of oxidized regenerated cellulose and collagen with silver. Again the Examiner's combination does not suggest nor teach why one skilled in the art should first complex the oxidized regenerated cellulose with silver in forming a wound dressing.

Secondly, there is no suggestion in the cited documents that lowering the silver content to the range of 0.1 wt % to 0.3 wt % would achieve the proliferative and anti-inflammatory effects identified by the present inventors. There is no teaching or suggestion in any of the cited documents that this object can be achieved by complexing oxidized regenerated cellulose with silver and then maintaining or reducing the silver content to the

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range of 0.1 to 0.3 wt. % in the final wound dressing material. Therefore the Examiner's rejection is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claim 11 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over GB 2,314,842 (Watt) in view of Jaschinski and further in view of US 3,032,182 (Bachtold). The Examiner cites Bachtold further in view of the rejection of Watt in view of Jaschinski for Bachtold's disclosure of sterile packaging. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Applicants incorporate the arguments provided above as applied to claims 1,5,6,10,13, and 16-18 in view of Watt and Jaschinski. The Examiner's citing of Bachtold adds nothing further in view of the Examiner's rejection of Watt and Jaschinski. Therefore, the rejection further in view of Bachtold is respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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